Serial No. 09/897,015

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the paragraph that begins on page 3, line 18 as follows:

A data relay unit according to the present invention includes a plurality of send/receive (SR) sections for sending and receiving data frames. Each of the data frame is received by a first SR section which is one of the SR sections, and sent by a second SR ~~sections~~ section which is another of the SR sections. A predetermined bit of each data frame is assigned to an identifier. The data relay unit further includes an identifier setting section and a relay inhibiting section. The identifier setting section sets the identifier of the data frame received by the first SR section to a value which represents that the identifier is set before the data frame is sent by the second SR section. The relay inhibiting section checks whether the identifier of the data frame received by the first SR section is set and inhibiting the data frame from being sent by the second SR section if it is determined that the identifier is set. Even if the data relay unit receives the data frame which has been already relayed, the relay inhibiting section can prevent the data frame from being relayed again by checking the identifier.

Please amend the paragraph that begins on page 9, line 20 as follows:

Each ECU 341-345, 351-355, 361-364 has a similar configuration to the first embodiment. However, each ECU 341-345, 351-355, 361-364 recognizes the predetermined bit of the data field of a data frame as a bit irrelevant to the data of the data frame. For example, when the data ID of the data frame is 'vehicle speed', the ECU 341-345, 351-355, 361-364 extracts ~~the bits~~data bits except the predetermined bit from the data field as the data which represents the vehicle speed.

2